

Amendments to the Claims

1-20. (canceled)

21. (currently amended) ~~The method according to claim 19 and prior to the dispensing step;~~
~~further comprising the steps of:~~

A method comprising:

- (a) storing in a data store in operative connection with a computer, data representative of a plurality of patients for whom medical items may be used;
- (b) storing in the data store, data representative of a plurality of medical items prescribed for use by corresponding patients;
- (c) storing in the data store, data representative of a plurality of authorized users;
- (d) inputting to the computer, user data;

- (e) comparing the input user data to the data stored concerning authorized users and determining that the input user data corresponds to one authorized user;
- (f) inputting to the computer, data corresponding to one of the plurality of patients;
- (g) inputting to the computer, data corresponding to at least one medical item prescribed for the one patient;
- (h) ~~wherein the step of dispensing the at least one medical item is carried out~~ responsive to the determination that the input user data corresponds to one authorized user, dispensing the at least one medical item from a medical item dispenser responsive to reading machine readable indicia on a report in step (g); and
- (i) ~~and further comprising~~ storing in the data store data representative that the at least one medical item has been taken by the one authorized user.

22-28. (canceled)